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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

12 July 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR: Biographic Information Division
Department of State

ATTENTION: Barbara P. Finke

SUBJECT: Biographic Cards

REFERENCE: Your memorandum, dated 30 June 1960, same subject

1. Thank you for your memorandum concerning the correct positioning of entries on the biographic cards to meet your needs for 4 x 6 filing.
2. We have personally taken up this matter with our printing facility and believe we have located the source of the error and have corrected it. We have been assured that henceforth the entries will be positioned properly.
3. The current batch already in process will probably contain some improperly positioned cards, but I trust this will be the last such occurrence. If improvement is not seen in the forthcoming week or two, please feel free to call me or [redacted] (extension 3049).

25X1A

25X1A

G. J. BAGNALL
Chief, Foreign Documents Division

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25X1A

CIA/FDD - [redacted]

June 30, 1960

State/BI - Barbara P. Finke

Biographic cards

This office wishes to call to your attention an unsatisfactory situation which we have been unable to set right by repeated telephone calls, extending over approximately a six-month period, to several offices of CIA having at least partial responsibility in the matter.

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The USSR Section of the Biographic Information Division receives on a continuing basis biographic cards prepared by [redacted] and reproduced by CIA. The cards are printed on 5 x 8 cards. Because BI files are able to accommodate 4 x 6 cards only, it has been a customary procedure for the card entries to be positioned in the upper left hand corner of the 5 x 8 card, so as to permit BI to machine cut the cards to 4 x 6 size by removing the bottom and right hand margins of the card. This procedure has been followed for years without any problems and to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Beginning some six or eight months ago, individual shipments of cards began to show an increasingly frequent incidence of variation in card margins, which, in turn, has resulted in serious complications for our card filing operation. Large quantities of cards were spoiled when machine cutting sliced off portions of entries which were positioned too low or too far to the right. Such cards, incidentally, cannot be reordered if spoiled. The individual hand cutting of cards, which would be feasible in processing occasional bad batches of cards, is so time consuming as to be completely impractical when large quantities of cards are involved. The variations, moreover, are so erratic as to preclude the use of special adjustments on our card cutting machine. Examples of properly and improperly positioned card entries are attached.

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We have made repeated telephone calls concerning this problem both to [redacted] and to [redacted] of FDD, who was designated as the person to contact concerning any problem arising from the biographic carding operation. According to [redacted] and [redacted], the card mats prepared by [redacted] are always properly positioned; in their opinion the root of the trouble lies rather in the reproduction of the cards. [redacted] of FDD has always expressed a willingness to help, and appears to have an understanding of our problem. He informs us that he has always forwarded our complaints, and admits that the reproduction process appears to be at fault. However, our repeated complaints to him, and, we assume, his repeated representations on our behalf, have been to no avail and the variation in card margins is, if anything, getting worse all the time.

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- 2 -

In view of the fact that the maintenance of uniform margins on biographic cards has presented no difficulties over a period of years, we urgently request that this matter be investigated, the reasons for the difficulty ascertained, and steps taken to insure future uniformity of card output. If you do not feel that your office is the appropriate one to take action in this matter, please let me know.

Attachments:
as indicated

State:RFB:BI:IDelousovitich:bmm

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